Latest snow depths and wind speeds – 5 February

Description

As forecast, unsettled wintry conditions brought snow and strong winds to parts of the UK overnight and this morning.

Eskdalemuir saw the deepest snow, with 14 cm of snow recorded at 10 am this morning, while Aviemore recorded 12 cm.

Many areas also saw strong winds, with a gust of 78 mph recorded at Culdrose, Cornwall and 99 mph recorded at Cairngorm Summit.

Snow depths at 10 am 5 February

TIME	SITE NAME	AREA	ELEVATION	SN CI
10:00	ESKDALEMUIR	DUMFRIESSHIRE	236	14
10:00	AVIEMORE	INVERNESS-SHIRE	228	12
10:00	DRUMALBIN	LANARKSHIRE	245	10
10:00	GLENANNE	ARMAGH	161	9
10:00	TULLOCH BRIDGE	INVERNESS-SHIRE	249	7
10:00	REDESDALE CAMP	NORTHUMBERLAND	211	7
10:00	BALLYPATRICK FOREST	ANTRIM	156	5
10:00	SPADEADAM	CUMBRIA	285	5
10:00	THOMASTOWN	FERMANAGH	72	3
10:00	BINGLEY	WEST YORKSHIRE	262	2
10:00	ALBEMARLE	NORTHUMBERLAND	142	2
10:00	WADDINGTON	LINCOLNSHIRE	68	1
10:00	SHAWBURY	SHROPSHIRE	72	1

Maximum gust speeds 5 February

TIME	SITE NAME	AREA	ELEVATION	MAX GUST SPEED (mph)
00:00	CULDROSE	CORNWALL	76	78
04:00	SCILLY ST MARYS AIRPORT	ISLES OF SCILLY	31	75
00:00	CHIVENOR	DEVON	6	67
03:00	ISLE OF PORTLAND	DORSET	52	66
04:00	JERSEY AIRPORT	JERSEY	84	66
03:00	GUERNSEY AIRPORT	GUERNSEY	101	64

00:00	CAMBORNE	CORNWALL	86.85	62
02:00	SOUTHAMPTON, OCEANOGRAPHY CENTRE	HAMPSHIRE	26	62
01:00	SOUTH UIST RANGE	WESTERN ISLES	4	62
00:00	AVONMOUTH	AVON	9	62
00:00	CARDINHAM, BODMIN	CORNWALL	200	61
01:00	TIREE	ARGYLL	9	60
03:00	WIGHT: ST CATHERINES POINT	ISLE OF WIGHT	20	60
01:00	WIGHT: NEEDLES OLD BATTERY	ISLE OF WIGHT	80	60
02:00	YEOVILTON	SOMERSET	20	60
01:00	CAPEL CURIG	GWYNEDD	216	59
01:00	ABERDARON	GWYNEDD	95	59
04:00	ISLAY: PORT ELLEN	ARGYLL	17	58
01:00	LERWICK	SHETLAND	82	58
00:00	MUMBLES HEAD	WEST GLAMORGAN	43	56
01:00	ODIHAM	HAMPSHIRE	118	56

Maximum gust speeds – mountain sites

TIME	SITE NAME	AREA	ELEVATION	MAX GUST SPEED (mph)
09:00	CAIRNGORM SUMMIT	INVERNESS-SHIRE	1237	99
07:00	CAIRNWELL	ABERDEENSHIRE	928	86
08:00	AONACH MOR	INVERNESS-SHIRE	1130	75
09:00	BEALACH NA BA	ROSS & CROMARTY	773	67
04:00	GREAT DUN FELL	CUMBRIA	847	56
10:00	GLEN OGLE	PERTHSHIRE	564	54

Warnings for ice, snow and wind remain in place in some areas.

Date Created
February 2013

January weather – your pictures

Description

Thank you for sharing your January weather pictures with us on Twitter. Here's a selection of our favourites. The January summary video is coming shortly.

> @metoffice view of Ossett from Netherton Sat 26th Jan. twitter.com/MarkDParsons/s…
>
> — Mark Parsons (@MarkDParsons) January 28, 2013

> @metoffice my boy Jacob on his sledge in Netherton Wakefield. twitter.com/MarkDParsons/s…
>
> — Mark Parsons (@MarkDParsons) January 28, 2013

> @metoffice twitter.com/ClerkinJill/st…
>
> — Jill Clerkin (@ClerkinJill) January 28, 2013

> @metoffice twitter.com/chrishallam40/…
>
> — Chris Hallam (@chrishallam40) January 28, 2013

> @metoffice Snowy Sunderland. twitter.com/PeterCrompton1…
>
> — Peter Crompton (@PeterCrompton1) January 28, 2013

> twitter.com/TigerTrophy/st…@metofficeYoung Topper sailors training at Rutland Sailing Club last Saturday in anticipation of Tiger Trophy
>
> — John Merricks (@TigerTrophy) January 28, 2013

> @metoffice Alton, Hants twitter.com/jayneinchawton…
>
> — Jayne Whittock (@jayneinchawton) January 28, 2013

@metoffice twitter.com/macno_pickle/s…

— Steven Bailey (@macno_pickle) January 28, 2013

@metoffice my winter photo: Blenheim Palace Estate Oxfordshire taken couple of weeks ago on my way to work twitter.com/k1eranw/status…

— Kieran Woodruff (@k1eranw) January 28, 2013

@metoffice Rain after the snow. #january twitter.com/domsdads/statu…

— Robert Rudman™ (@domsdads) January 28, 2013

@metoffice Castle Donington in the snow twitter.com/CastleDoningto…

— Vicky Ambrose-Jones (@CastleDonington) January 28, 2013

@metoffice frosty leaf in my garden in thurrock twitter.com/Thurrock0rob/s…

— rob lay (@Thurrock0rob) January 28, 2013

@metoffice saw these chaps in Ivinghoe twitter.com/MaryDoherty1/s…

— Mary Doherty (@MaryDoherty1) January 28, 2013

@metoffice River Humber taken from Hessle Foreshore, East Yorkshire. Photo taken January 2013 twitter.com/BadWolf2009/st…

— Simon Fields (@BadWolf2009) January 28, 2013

@metoffice flickr.com/photos/tupperw…

— The Flying GoPro (@theflyinggopro) January 28, 2013

@metoffice How about this pic of Hartshead Pike, Tameside, in the snow ow.ly/i/1qQtm ?

— Tameside Council (@TamesideCouncil) January 28, 2013

@metoffice Took this in Pontypridd, just as a branch snapped under the weight of the snow.

twitter.com/zubiedoo/statu…

— Debra wood (@zubiedoo) January 28, 2013

@metoffice twitter.com/eihcra1980/sta…

— Graeme Rowell (@eihcra1980) January 28, 2013

@metoffice will this one do? flickr.com/photos/shaunbe…

— Shaun Bellis (@shaunbellis) January 28, 2013

Date Created
February 2013

Will the UK see snow this weekend?

Description

There is potential for some significant amounts of snow over parts of the UK later this weekend. However, the detail of where and when this snow will fall is still uncertain.

So what is happening in the atmosphere? A frontal system that's been working its way across the Atlantic during the last couple of days will push rather erratically eastwards across the UK this weekend, bringing some persistent and, at times, heavy rain to parts of the country. We also currently have some cold air sitting over the near continent and, as the rain advances eastwards, an area of low pressure will form over southern parts of the UK, causing winds to turn easterly and bring this colder air in from the continent.

How and where this area of low pressure forms will also be critical in determining where and when the heaviest of the snow falls, and exactly where the dividing line between rain, sleet and snow is.

The most likely scenario at present shows the heaviest snow across the Midlands, Wales and northern England with over 10 cm of snow currently forecast.

However, different computer models are currently showing this process taking place in different ways and in different locations, and it is uncertainty within the atmosphere that is making the Chief Forecasters job so difficult. To help us provide the best advice possible to you, the Met Office uses both deterministic forecast and ensemble forecast models.

A deterministic forecast uses current observations of the atmosphere to create a single forecast. In the case of this weekend's weather it indicated the most likely place to see snow. However, over the last few days the most likely part of the UK has changed each day which in itself generates lower confidence in the detail of the forecast. To help increase confidence, we use an ensemble model which generates a group of forecasts each with slightly different starting conditions. The Met Office ensemble model has 24 solutions and the output of this model shows the spread in probability of where in the UK could see snow. This highest probability is the point where the majority of the 24 solutions are in agreement. This can be combined with the deterministic forecast to help make a final decision on forecasts and warnings.

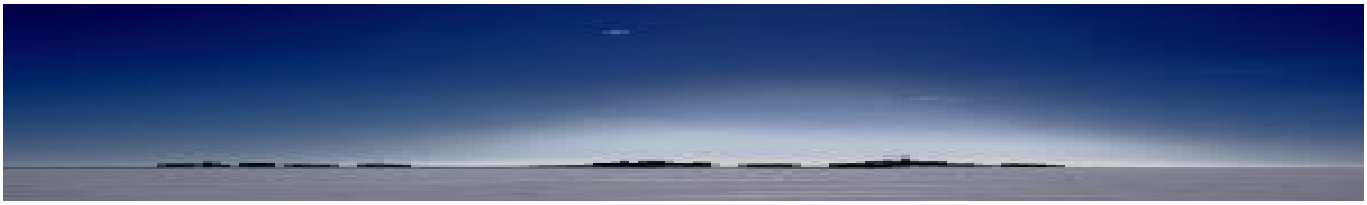
Met Office forecasters will continue to look at the available evidence with a view to providing the most accurate, timely, warnings and forecasts.

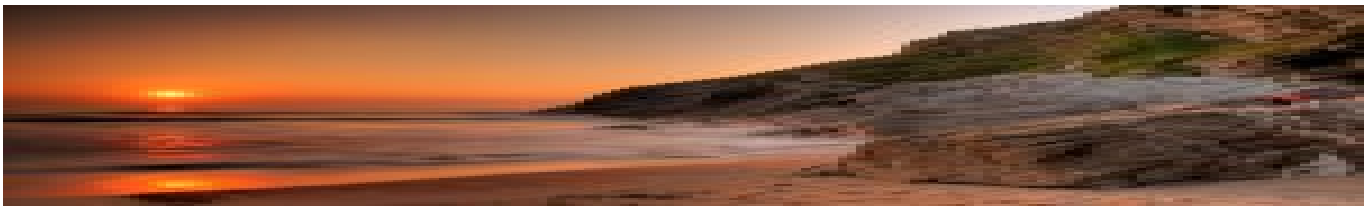
Date Created
February 2013

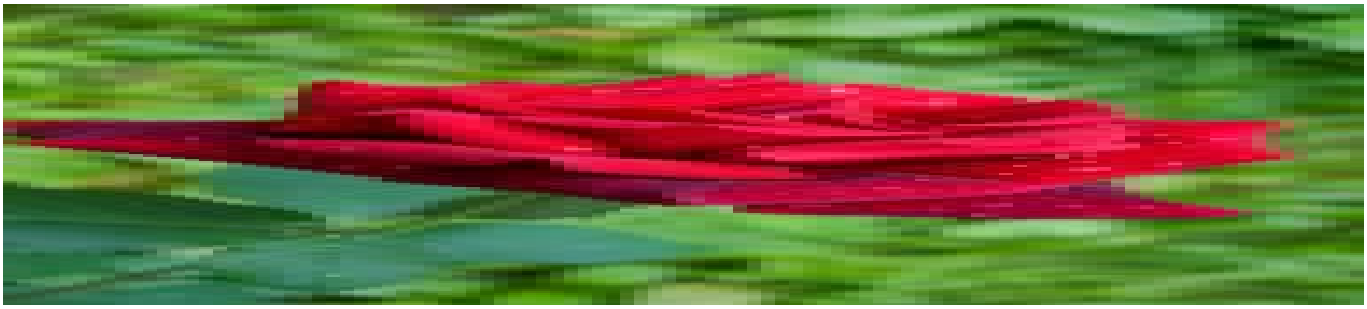
Top ten romantic weather phenomena

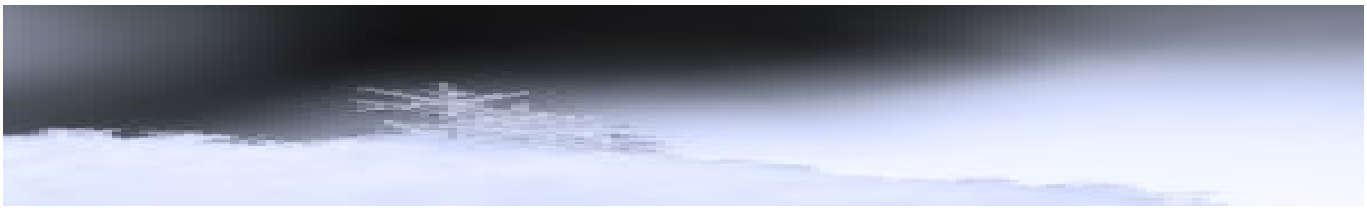
Description

With Valentine’s day this week, we’ve complied the top ten romantic or magical weather conditions.









1. **Diamond dust** – Diamond dust consists of extremely small ice crystals, usually formed at temperatures below -30 °C. The name diamond dust comes from the sparkling effect created when light reflects on the ice crystals in the air.
2. **Sunset** – Sunsets are colourful because the light from the setting sun has to travel through more of the atmosphere to reach us. This means more of the blue light from the sun is scattered away from us, so we can see more of the red light.
3. **Crepuscular rays** – This phenomenon occurs when light from the rising or setting sun is scattered, producing sunbeams.

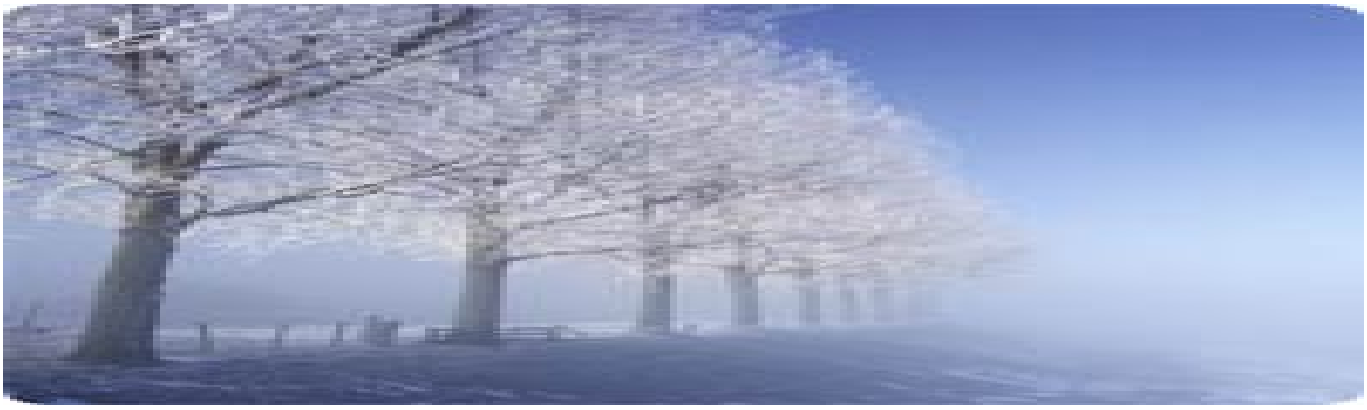
4. **Iridescent clouds** – A pretty display of iridescent colours in a cloud is most commonly seen in high level cumulus clouds.
5. **Dew** – Very small droplets of water which form during calm weather as the air cools. The process of droplets settling is called ‘dew-fall’.
6. **Frost** – Frost forms on still, clear and cold nights. The cool air causes water vapour in the air to condense and form droplets. When the temperature of the ground or surface is below 0 °C the moisture freezes into ice crystals.
7. **Double rainbow** – Magical as they may seem, a double rainbow occurs when a secondary rainbow forms outside of the brighter, primary rainbow. The colour sequence is reversed because the light has been reflected within each raindrop a second time. As the light has been refracted twice, the secondary rainbow will not be as bright.
8. **Snowflakes** – Every single snowflake is unique, but because molecules in the ice crystals that make up snowflakes join together in a hexagonal structure they always have six sides.
9. **Heart shape clouds** – Clouds can form in virtually any shape, and sometimes you may see some that look like things, even hearts.
10. **Halo** – A halo can appear around the sun or the moon, and although they may look angelic, can often signify that a weather front is approaching.

Date Created
February 2013

Cold weather across UK

Description

The start of this week was relatively mild and sunny but we have seen a change to colder and cloudier weather during the course of the week.



High pressure became established to the north-east of the UK and this dragged in colder air from Scandinavia. It took some time for the cold air to filter across the whole of the UK but over the last couple of days daytime temperatures struggled to rise to 3 °C in some places. Brisk winds across England and Wales made it feel much colder, and we saw a few snow showers across eastern parts of the country.

Will Lang, Met Office Chief Forecaster, said: “This is a different taste of winter to the snow and ice we have seen of late. These largely dry, settled and cold conditions may not be as disruptive to travel but they do present concerns surrounding the health and well being of the elderly and vulnerable.”

The Met Office issued a level 3 Cold Weather Alert in light of the widespread and prolonged cold conditions. These alerts give advance warning of adverse weather conditions, which enable people to take extra precautions to keep safe and well.

A Department of Health spokesperson said: “Severe cold weather can be dangerous, especially for the very young or very old or those with chronic disease. You can find advice on how to reduce your risk or that of somebody you know on the NHS Choices website, ringing NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 or contacting your local GP or pharmacist.

“The NHS is well prepared for the winter and we are providing an extra £330 million to the NHS and social care services to help cope with the added pressure that the winter brings.”

With high pressure remaining in place, cold and largely settled weather looks set to remain across the UK until the end of February at least, and you can find the latest information from our forecasts and warnings, our mobile apps and through broadcasts on TV and radio.

Date Created
February 2013

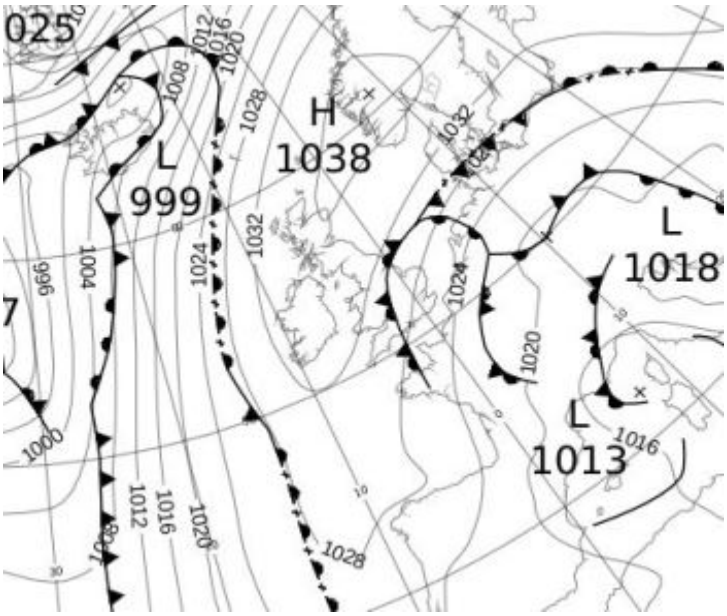
It’s cold but why is there no frost?

Description

There’s no denying that we have seen some cold weather this winter with plenty of frost, ice and in many cases, snow. However, the last week has been cold – arguably perhaps feeling colder than any other time this winter – but we haven’t seen any evidence of this on the ground in the way of frost. So how is this possible?

For a classic frosty night we need a few ingredients: low temperatures, clear skies, calm winds and moisture. A clear, calm night gives excellent radiation conditions – by this we mean that the heat absorbed by the Earth’s surface during the day escapes readily back into space and allows temperatures to fall. If the temperature falls to the dew point (the temperature to which air must cool for it to become saturated with water vapour) moisture will condense and form droplets on the ground’s surface. When temperatures fall below freezing the droplets freeze and we get frost.

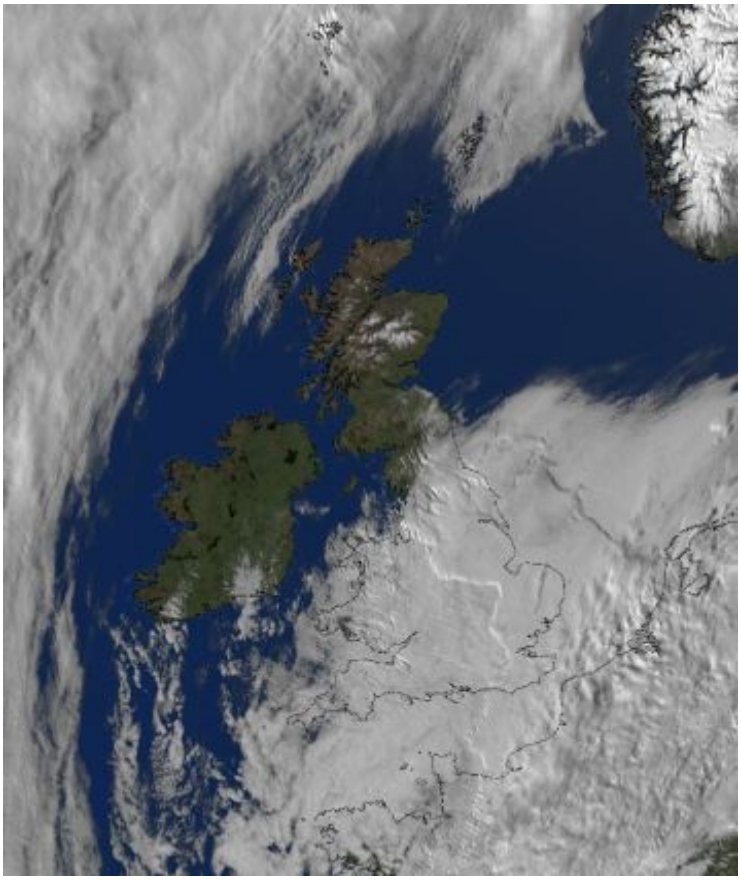
So what about the last few days? They have been cold but there hasn’t really been any prolonged or hard frost. How come? Well, much of Scotland and Northern Ireland has had the required ingredients and been frosty, but the rest of the UK has only had low temperatures. Much of England and Wales have seen a fair amount of cloud and some brisk winds.



Surface pressure chart from 25 February 2013

Cloud acts as a blanket and although temperatures have fallen during the night-time, cloud cover has stopped them falling well below freezing and therefore made it difficult for a thick frost to form. The wind is also important as it mixes the lower part of our atmosphere. Rather than having cold air pooling in one place and causing low temperatures, the wind can bring less cold air from another location or even bring it down from the upper atmosphere. This also helps to keep temperatures from

falling too low. However, easterly winds this week have certainly made it feel very cold indeed!



Visible satellite image from 25 February 2013

Lastly, the air near the surface has been relatively dry. This is important because it means the temperature of the air must fall very low in order to reach its dew point. The cloud and wind has stopped this from happening easily and therefore reduced the risk of frost.

Cold weather, then, brings lots of different tastes of winter, especially to the UK, and we have seen nearly all of them this season. More information on all types of weather can be found here.

Date Created
February 2013

What have February and the winter been like so far?

Description

Provisional figures from the Met Office show that February so far (1 – 25) has been colder and drier than average, while the winter as a whole (December 1 to February 25) looks set to be pretty average.

For February, everywhere is set to have been colder than average with the UK mean temperature currently standing at 2.7 °C. Northern parts have seen the best of the sunshine with Scotland recording 13 % more sunshine than average at 71 hours.

EARLY	mean temperature		sunshine duration		precipitation	
1-25 Feb 2013	Actual	Difference from 1981-2010 average	Actual	% of 1981-2010 average	Actual	% of 1981-2010 average
	degC	degC	hours	%	mm	%
UK	2.7	-0.9	66.1	95	58.0	65
England	2.9	-1.2	62.9	85	41.0	68
Wales	3.0	-1.0	66.9	95	79.0	71
Scotland	2.2	-0.5	71.0	113	78.2	60
N Ireland	4.0	-0.3	67.1	101	68.9	82

For the winter as a whole, the UK mean temperature of 3.3 °C makes it milder than 2008/09 (3.2 °C), 2009/10 (1.6 °C) and 2010/11 (2.4 °C), but colder than 2011/12 (4.6 °C).

However looking further back 2006/07 and 2007/08 were two very mild winters with UK mean temperatures of 5.6 °C and 4.9 °C respectively. The 2006/07 winter was the second warmest on the national record going back to 1910, behind 1988/89 when the UK mean temperature was 5.8 °C.

EARLY	mean temperature		sunshine duration		precipitation	
Winter 2012/2013 (3 days to go)	Actual	Difference from 1981-2010 average	Actual	Percentage of 1981-2010 average	Actual	Percentage of 1981-2010 average
	degC	degC	hours	%	mm	%
UK	3.3	-0.4	152.2	96	345.9	105
England	3.6	-0.6	166.9	95	267.4	116
Wales	3.8	-0.4	154.4	96	501.4	116
Scotland	2.5	-0.2	128.7	100	436.5	93
N Ireland	4.2	-0.1	144.3	97	332.3	106

This winter has once again demonstrated how variable the weather in the UK can be. Starting with some mild and wet weather in December and a mild start to January it turned cold from the middle of January with snow affecting many areas at times. The cold weather continued through February which was a dry month.

Date Created
February 2013